

**Remarks by Josefina G. Carbonell
Assistant Secretary for Aging
Pan American Health Organization Reception
December 10, 2005**

- It is a pleasure to be here tonight.
- I want to thank Dr. Mirta Roses Periago, the Director of the Pan American Health Organization, for graciously hosting this event.
- I also want to thank all of the other PAHO colleagues who are here and helped with this reception.
- The Administration on Aging has collaborated on a number of efforts with PAHO and we are very pleased to continue this collaboration tonight.
- Before I continue my remarks, I think this is a good time to introduce a new colleague, Alicia Diaz. I will let Ms. Diaz tell you about her new role in the Office of Global Health Affairs.
- Alicia, would you like to say a few words?
- Thank you Alicia.
- Now, I would like to personally extend a welcome to all of you who have traveled across the globe to be with us on this historic occasion.
- You have journeyed here from some 24 countries – from Asia, from Africa, from Europe and from Latin America.
- The White House Conference on Aging comes about only once every 10 years.
- These events have a tradition of diversity in participants, focus, and interests
- Each of the White House Conferences on Aging has had an impact on aging policies in the United States.

- Monday morning, you will see over 1,000 people who have gathered from across the country because they are deeply concerned and interested in the future of aging policy programs in this country.
- The 1,200 delegates participating in the Conference represent the Governors of all 50 states, the U.S. Territories, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia; the members of the 109th Congress; and the National Congress of American Indians.
- This week you will see what is the culmination of several year's preparation involving input from thousands of people across the country. All of this work led to commonly agreed upon themes and resolutions to be voted upon at the conference.
- 73 resolutions were approved and sent to the Conference's delegates for their review. These resolutions are based on public input solicited over the past 15 months, obtained from testimony and reports submitted at nearly 400 Listening Sessions; from Solutions Forums; Mini-Conferences; and Independent Aging Agenda Events; as well as general public input that has been received by the WHCoA.
- The Policy Committee believes that the input received accurately reflects the emerging issues, interests, and concerns of individuals who participated in these events as well as the unsolicited input from across the country.
- Delegates will be asked to vote on up to 50 resolutions and develop implementation strategies that they believe are the most important for current and future generations of seniors. These will be presented to the President and Congress to help guide aging policies for the next decade and beyond.
- We are very pleased that so many experts from other countries have been able to join us to witness this "bottoms up" process and this historic event.

- The last conference in 1995, thirty five international observers participated. This year we have almost 50!
- As you all well know, aging is a global issue.
- At tomorrow's global aging roundtable, we will hear from some of you on how you are dealing with aging issues in your individual countries. We look forward to this exchange since we stand to learn from each others experiences, programs and problems.
- On Monday, International Observers will have the opportunity to talk to aging experts from the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss current research, policies and programs
- On Tuesday, we will be back here at PAHO, when you will have more time to discuss health related issues, and talk about both regional PAHO activities and WHO global aging-related activities.
- For those of you who are not from the Americas, I am sure that you will find this meeting quite useful to bring back to your own regions.
- Again, my special thanks to PAHO for organizing this wonderful reception.
- Please enjoy the rest of the evening.